

Opportunities for Teens!

The following are chances for teens to participate in a variety of experiences to live a fuller life in the faith. They will meet other teens, and spend valuable time learning about who they are meant to become. Our Lady of the Assumption has a policy of asking families to pay only 1/3 of the total costs of these events, the other 2/3 coming from the parish and from the various Youth Ministry fundraising activities that take place all year long. No teen will be turned away for an inability to pay. There are also scholarship monies available. Please read through these carefully with your teen, check out the websites where available and pray on it. Deadlines are fast approaching, so please let Mrs. Gavin know if you are interested. 785-1605 or youthola@nycap.rr.com.

Mission: Possible; Step by Step with Jesus Thursday, April 20-Saturday, April 22, 2017

Held at Pyramid Life Center in Paradox, NY, high school youth come together in exploring the foundations of being Catholic and how we can live out our Missionary Call. The cost is \$125 and includes all lodging, meals and supplies. Deadline to register is March 31. See Mrs. Gavin for additional information.

Breakaway (A Junior High Experience) Sunday, June 25-Thursday, June 29, 2017

Held at Pyramid Life Center in Paradox, NY, Breakaway is an experience for youth entering grades 7-9. The week will feature Hiking, Service Activities, Liturgy, Workshops, Awesome Food, Swimming, Canoeing, Praying, Kayaking, and fun!! Youth will be led by a team of youth ministers who have a passion for middle school youth. The cost of the program is \$225 which covers meals, lodging, and all program supplies. EARLY BIRD SPECIAL: \$200 if registered by March 31! Deadline to register...May 31.

St. Isaac Jogues Youth Conference (for teens entering grades 9-12) Friday, July 14-Sunday, July 16, 2017

The St. Isaac Jogues Youth Conference is a yearly event that has been held here in the Albany Diocese since 2006 offering the quality of a national conference within an intimate hometown environment. The SIJYC is a Catholic ministry for teens and spings from the desire to offer a low cost summer conference with the following goal: to bring teens a deeper sense of their personal relationship with Christ, to demonstrate how to translate that relationship to everyday life and how to grow their relationship with Christ after the conference ends. For more information visit joguesyouthconference.com and speak with Mrs. Gavin.

SALT (Service Action Learning Team) (for youth 15-18 years old) Sunday, July 30-Thursday, August 3, 2017

SALT is a locally organized service immersion experience for high school youth. Young people will explore many of the important social justice issues that confront our community. Each day is filled with hands-on service opportunities. The goal of SALT is to understand how to put faith in action. The cost for the SALT experience is \$275, and includes all supplies, meals, lodging, and travel to sites. See Mrs. Gavin for more information. Deadline to register June 15, 2017.

Choose a Lenten Sacrifice to Do As a Family.
Is there something your family can sacrifice that might help another family in need? Consider donating what you might spend on a meal out to a food pantry instead.

MESSAGE FROM OUR PASTOR:

Dear Parents and Families,

Lent is a wonderful time for all of us to grow spiritually and to renew our faith in Jesus Christ. I encourage you to look for some ways to make the Lenten journey a part of your family home-life. Here are a few things to consider as we travel along the next 40 days.

Beginning with Ash Wednesday, make every effort to bring your children to receive the blessed ashes on their forehead. The ashes remind us that we all belong to the family of the Church. Talk about the ashes. Where do they come from? (...burned palms from last Palm Sunday) When we accept the ashes we make a promise to live our faith, "Believe the Good News". Ask your children what Lenten promises they would like to make that will help them grow in their faith. Write them down and put them on the refrigerator door.

What Lenten resolution can everyone in the family be a part of? How about a "Rice Bowl"? You can pick one up at the door of the church, keep it on the kitchen table and drop in some extra change to give to the poor. At dinner time remember the poor in your prayer and give thanks to God for your own blessings. On Holy Thursday, bring the Rice Bowl back to church and offer it to the poor.

Lent is six weeks and that can be a long time for children to stay focused. My suggestion is to pick something for each week that will serve as a reminder that we are making a spiritual journey toward Easter.

Prayer, fasting, and acts of charity are at the heart of Lent. Everyone can participate in these simple acts and make a joyful return to the Lord.

Blessed Lenten Days,
Fr. Burke

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Lent 2017
Volume 3, Issue 1

Living in Faith

A Newsletter from the Faith Formation and Youth Ministry Office

Celebrating Lent at Our Lady of the Assumption

During the season of Lent, we bring to mind Jesus' 40 days in the desert, where he was tempted by the devil. As a family, you might want to read the account of Jesus' temptation in the desert from a children's Bible.

Although some Lenten practices are personal, there are many things you can do as a family. For example, you can pray often as a family. It can be as simple as saying Grace before meals (many of you already do this).

(Bless us, O Lord, and these thy gifts, which we are about to receive from thy bounty, through Christ, our Lord. Amen.)

Or how about a prayer on the way to practice?

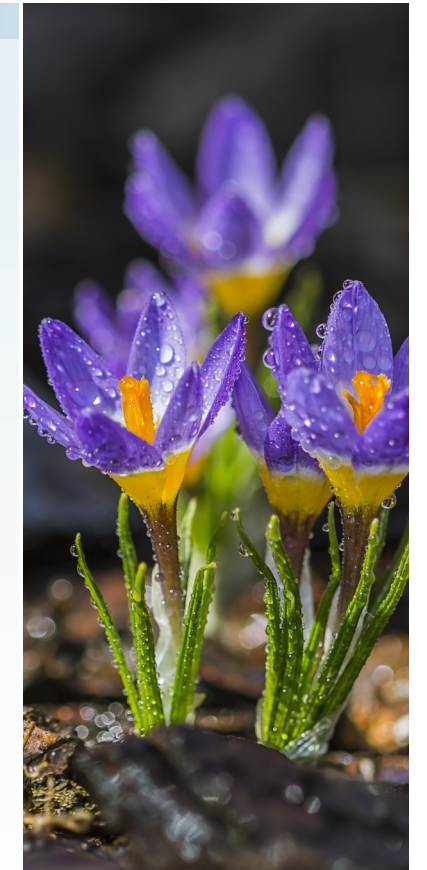
*(Angel of God, my guardian dear,
to whom his love commits me here,
ever this day be at my side,
to light and guard, to rule and guide. Amen.)*

Check out the "The Burnt Cookie Examen" on page 3 of this newsletter. This is what many of our days look like!

Lent is a wonderful time to refocus our commitment to attending mass, not just on weekends, but on holy days, week days, and especially during the Easter Triduum. Ash Wednesday is an invitation to learn about Jesus, and to rediscover Jesus. Instead of giving up those chocolates, why not commit to doing just one thing each day to remember Jesus and all he has given us.

"We all know the things that make us happy, but we don't always do them. Lent is an opportunity to change that. This year we invite you to do something different. Sign up for **Best Lent Ever**, a FREE, video-based email program featuring internationally acclaimed speaker and New York Times best selling author Matthew Kelly. From Ash Wednesday to Easter Sunday, Matthew will help you identify what stands between you and happiness... and what to do about it. Are you ready for your best Lent ever?" *(Dynamic Catholic website)*

To sign up, visit www.olalatham.org and follow the link in our news items, or go directly to www.dynamiccatholic.com/bestlentever/



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Dates to remember!

- Ash Wednesday March 1
- Mission Possible April 20-22
- Breakaway June 25-29
- St. Isaac Jogues July 14-16
- VBS July 24-28
- SALT July 30-August 3



Find a three leaf clover
And talk about the Holy Trinity.

Meditation Moment—Time with St. Joseph

Dim the lights and create as much quiet as possible. Slowly read this meditation, pausing between sentences. Have your children join you!

God cares for us and helps us care for others.

Take a deep breath. Relax. Get comfortable. Close your eyes.

Imagine yourself in a carpenter's workshop. You see wooden tables, chairs, shelves, and cabinets everywhere. A bearded man, making measurements along a piece of glowing wood, raises his kind eyes, sees you, smiles, and says, "I am Joseph, the carpenter. I'm happy you are here. Come. Feel the smoothness of this table I'm making."

Joseph says, "I do this work to earn a living to take care of Mary and Jesus. Besides, I simply love to make things out of wood. Each of us does something to care for the others in our family. Mary cooks and cleans and weaves fabric for our clothing. Jesus helps me here in the workshop. He also studies, just like all students."

You think about the good work that is done by people who care for you. You picture their faces slowly, one by one. You thank each of them, one by one. You thank God for making those people part of your life.

Joseph leans toward you saying, "What do you love to do? What talents and skills do you have that you can use to care for others? You have many choices, you know." Think about the things you love to do that enable you to care for others.

Joseph gives you a small polished, wooden box. You lift the lid. Inside you find a picture or a charm or a piece of paper with a word on it. This picture, charm, or word tells you about the talent or ability you have that can help you care for others now and in the future.

Praise and thank God for this gift and the happiness that will come to you and others when you use it.

Say goodbye to Joseph and his workshop, and peacefully return home.

By Jeanne Heiberg, shared from [Catechist Magazine](#), March 2014

Make Cards for the Fathers in Your Life.
St. Joseph was a wonderful husband and father, and his feast day is March 19th.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL JULY 24-28, 2017

MAKER FUN FACTORY Created by God, Built for a Purpose!

**Send your kids on an imaginative,
impacting adventure!**

At Maker Fun Factory VBS, kids discover not only that God made them the way they are, but for a purpose too. Maker Fun Factory is filled with incredible Bible-learning experiences kids see, hear, touch, and even taste! Scieny-Fun Gizmos™, team-building games, cool Bible songs, and tasty treats are just a few of the standout activities that help faith flow into real life. Plus, we'll help kids discover how to see evidence of God in everyday life—something we call God Sightings. Get ready to hear *that* phrase a lot!

Registrations for children and teens will be available in the Gathering Space in late May. Deadline to register....June 30, 2017!

Don't miss out!

Attend Mass on Ash Wednesday
Wear your ashes out into the world as a witness of our faith.

Siena College Teen Lenten Experience!

**BE INSPIRED ... BE ENGAGED
BE ACCEPTED ... BE RENEWED ... BE A SAINT
BE WITH SIENA STUDENTS WHO LOVE THEIR FAITH**

When: Sunday, March 19th, 2017, 3-8pm

Where: St. Mary of the Angels Chapel, Hines Hall, Siena College

Cost: \$12.00 (covers the cost of dinner in the dining hall)

Make new friends!

Share faith!

Have fun!

Meet the Friars!

Sing, play and pray with the "Psalm 150 Praise Band"
at the 7pm College Mass!

**EXPERIENCE YOUR FAITH IN A WHOLE NEW WAY
WITH SIENA STUDENTS LEADING THE DAY.**

Contact Mrs. Gavin at
785-1605 if you are interested
in attending. Deadline to
register is **March 1.**



GOD LOVINGLY CREATES PEOPLE.

(PSALM 139; GENESIS 1:26-2:4)

Ash Wednesday

Mass at 9 am & 5:30 pm, Ashes only at 12 noon

Easter Triduum

Holy Thursday—Mass at 7:30 pm

Good Friday—Mass at 7:30 pm

Easter Vigil—Mass at 7:30 pm

Easter Sunday—Mass at 7:30 am & 10:30 am

The Burnt Cookie Examen

Lord, here I am in your presence.

I'm having a hard time with gratitude right now so please, Lord, help me to see past the burnt cookies, spilt flour, and milk too.

Piles of dishes, and mountains of laundry too.

Soggy soccer gear, bags of groceries on the floor, squeaky strings permeating the air.

Kid's tantrums, and grandpa's too.

My breathless frustrations and imperfections.

Because, Lord, I know that you are all good, and you are with me through it all.

Each moment, each day, a gift.

I offer you myself, my efforts this day, so imperfect, yet so true.

I offer them to you, my God, who sees beauty where I see mess. Who makes all things whole, and nothing less.

Remind me, Lord, of the privilege I have in serving you in the family, in the mundane.

Remind me, Lord, of the gift of food that makes the dishes dirty. Machines and harnessed power that wash the dishes and laundry too.

You, Lord, who makes a symphony of a practice session. Gourmet meals of burnt offerings. Harmony from dissonance. Open my eyes, Lord, to see you in the mud from the field. You, in the warmth of those around the hearth.

Where I have failed today help me to do better tomorrow.

For where your touch is, there is Grace, Life, Beauty, and Love.

And you know, Lord, I need your Grace, your gentle caress, for imperfect me. Imperfect and loved.

By Rebecca Ruiz (Shared at ignationspirituality.com)

**GOD IS ALWAYS
WITH YOU.**

